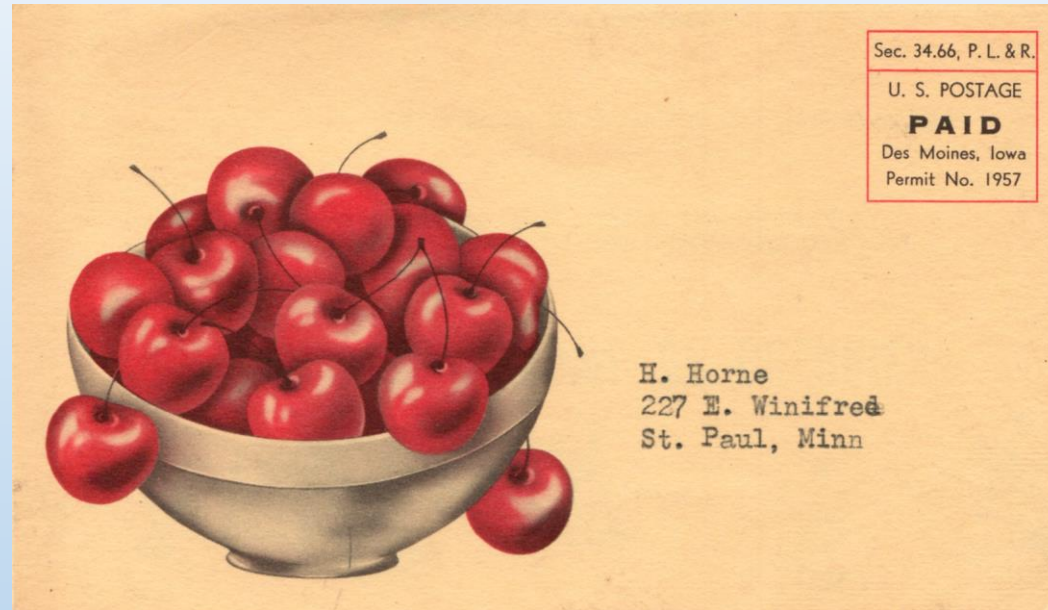


Life is Just a _____



[Bowl of Cherries]

Idioms Illustrated and Explained – Part III Man (18 phrases)

by Tom Fortunato

idiom (n.)- an expression whose meaning can not be derived from its elements

How many times over the course of a day do you hear these? They're so common in our vernacular that we hardly take the time to recognize them with thousands in the English language alone. A few are presented here using a wide variety of material found mostly in dealer junk boxes. Don't expect to find philatelic rarities, but you will see some interesting items.

Most important is your participation! This presentation is in "fill in the blank" game format. You'll see a partial phrase at the top of each page related to the item shown along with a clue to the idiom's meaning. Just complete the phrase and keep track of your number right and wrong.

PowerPoint users have 5 seconds before a 15 second timeclock counts down then "dings," by which time an answer must be given. PDF users play on the honor system! Clicking the next page reveals the answer along with details of the origins and meaning of the idiom. Ten references were used researching these. Not all agreed, but the majority plausible response appears here.

This is 1 of 7 thematic related parts (# phrases in each). Enjoy them all!

I – Animals (24) II – Food (14) III – Man (18) IV - Sports & Games (9)

V – Nature (25) VI – Music (8) VII - Pot Luck (39)

III- Man at your _____

- *readily available, handy*



III- Man at your fingertips

- *readily available, handy*



From 1905 American Strand Magazine, “He has at his finger-tips every stroke of the game.”



III- Man lend me _____

- *listen, give attention to*



III- Man lend me **your ear**

- *listen, give attention to*



Unknown origin, but made popular by William Shakespeare, who wrote in *Julius Caesar*, “Friends, Romans, countrymen, lend me your ears.”

III- Man turn _____

- *encourage equal retaliation*



III- Man turn the other cheek

- *encourage equal retaliation*

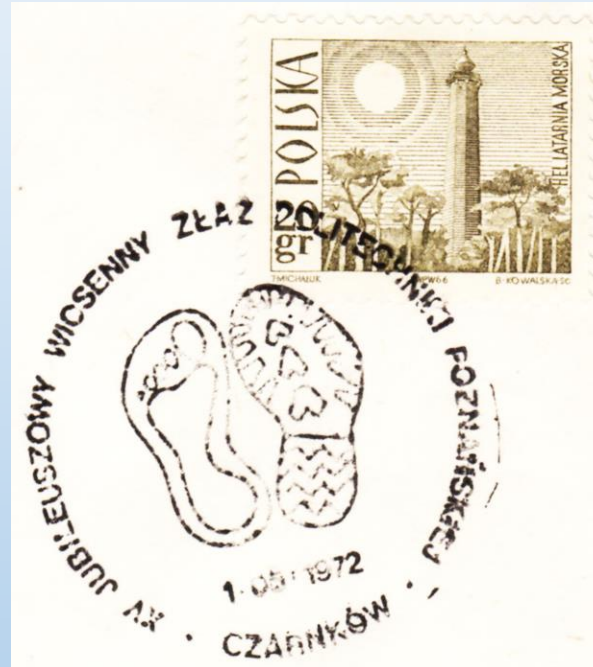


The Bible, Matthew 5:39, “But I say unto you, that ye resist not evil, but whomever should smite thee on the right cheek, turn to him the other also.”

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III- Man the shoe is on _____

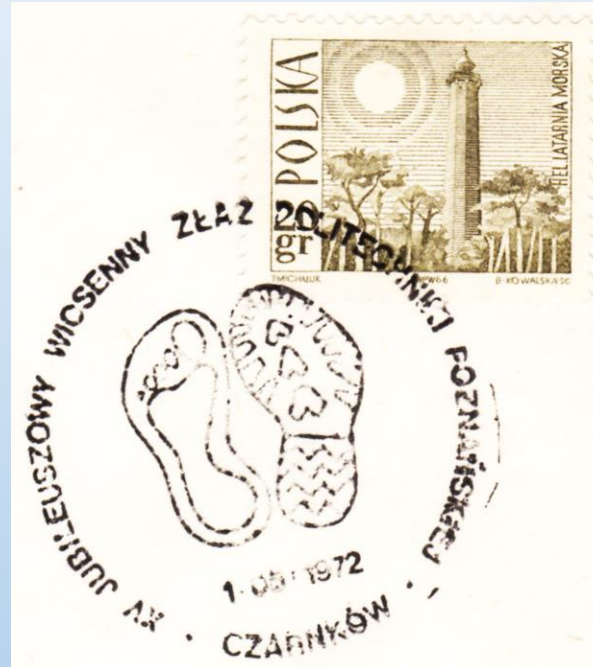
- *reversal of a situation*



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III- Man the shoe is on the other foot

- *reversal of a situation*



Right and left boots weren't invented until the 19th century, being able to be swapped as necessary. The term shoes replaced boots in the 20th century.

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III- Man get something _____

- *explain a troubling secret*



III- Man get something off your chest

- *explain a troubling secret*



As the heart “feels” emotion, and it is in your chest, disclosure frees one’s heart.



III- Man by the _____

- *barely getting by*



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III- Man by the skin of your teeth

- *barely getting by*



While mentioned in the Bible, made popular in Britain in the 1800's, referring to the film covering your teeth when you wake up in the morning.

III- Man _____ above the rest

- *outstanding, far exceeding*



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III- Man **head and shoulders** above the rest

- *outstanding, far exceeding*



Originally meaning rough treatment (1500's), Americanized in the 1864 Webster's Dictionary.

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III- Man

keep a _____

- *remain steadfast*



III- Man

keep a stiff upper lip

- *remain steadfast*



When one is about to cry, the first sign is a trembling lip, hence the phrase. Same as the older British “Keep your pecker up.” Noted in John Neal’s 1833 *Down Easter*, “Keep a stiff upper lip, no bones broke...”

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III- Man _____ where your mouth is

- *prove something said*



III- Man **put your money** where your mouth is

- *prove something said*



American expression from the 1930's of unknown origin.

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III- Man keep your _____

- *be optimistic in the face of adversity*



III- Man keep your chin up

- *be optimistic in the face of adversity*



Similar origins to “Keep a stiff upper lip.”

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III- Man work your _____

- *tirelessly continue on*



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III- Man work your fingers to the bone

- *tirelessly continue on*

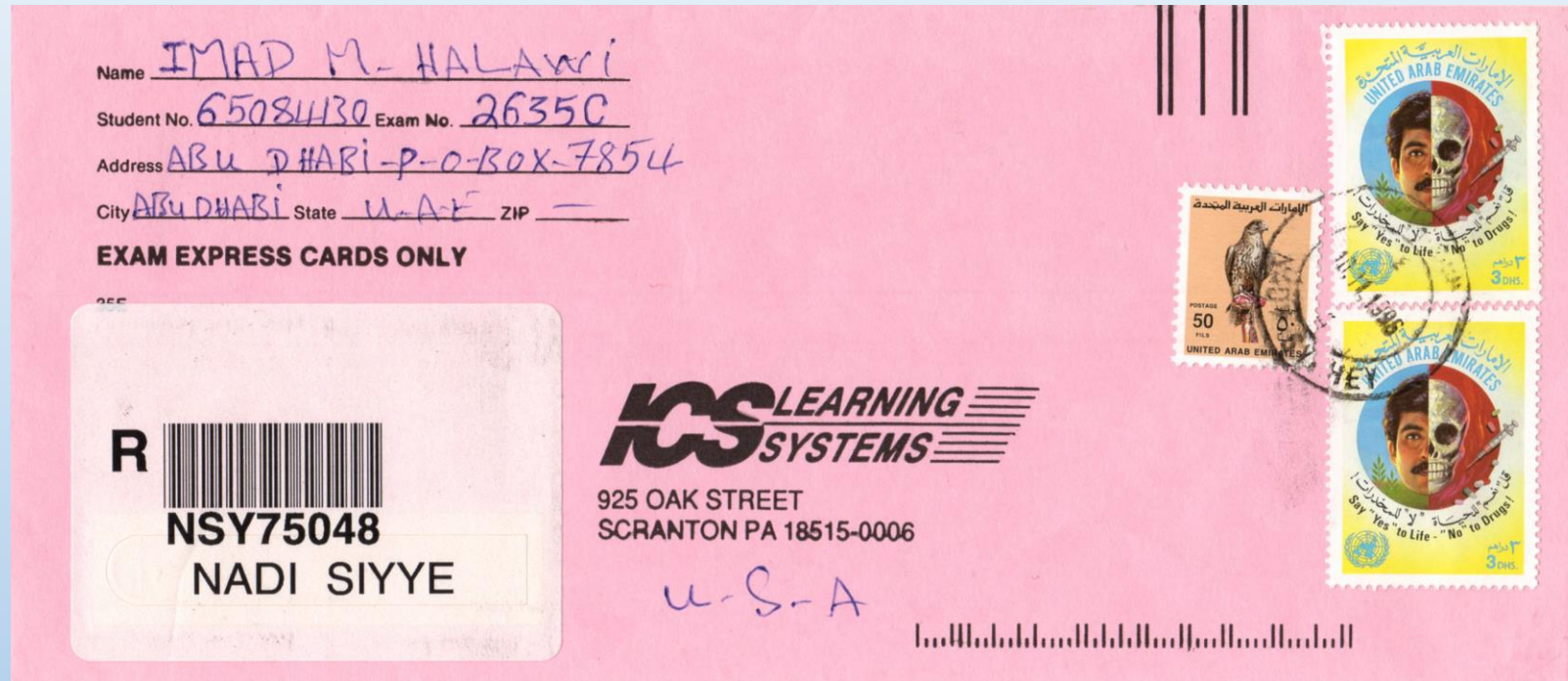


Attributed to Edward Bulwer-Lytton in his 1853 *My Novel*, “I’ll work my fingers to the bone till I pay back the other five.”

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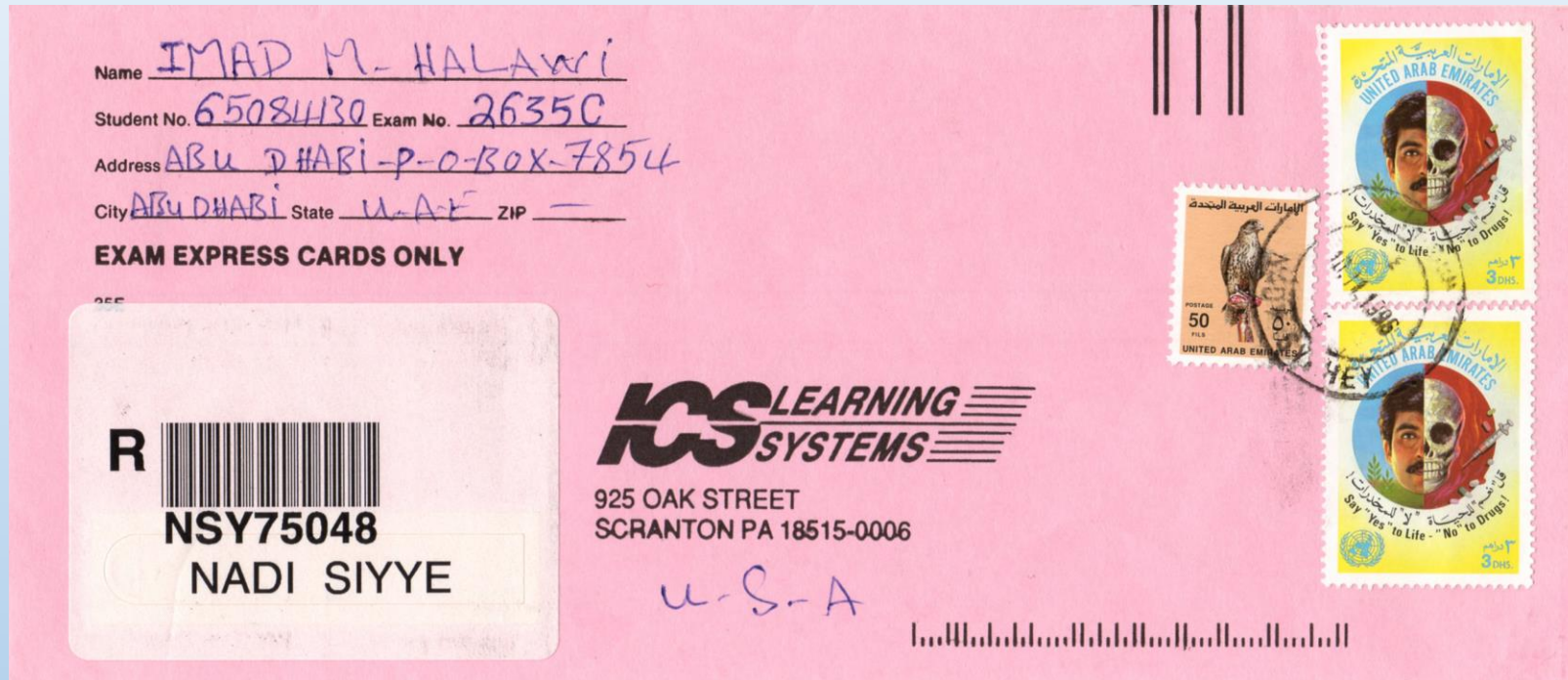
III- Man all _____

- *thin*



III- Man all skin and bones

- *thin*



Used in the 1430 *Hymns to the Virgin and Christ*, “Me is left but skin and bone.”

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III- Man look _____

- *scornful, snobbish*



III- Man

look **down one's nose**

- *scornful, snobbish*

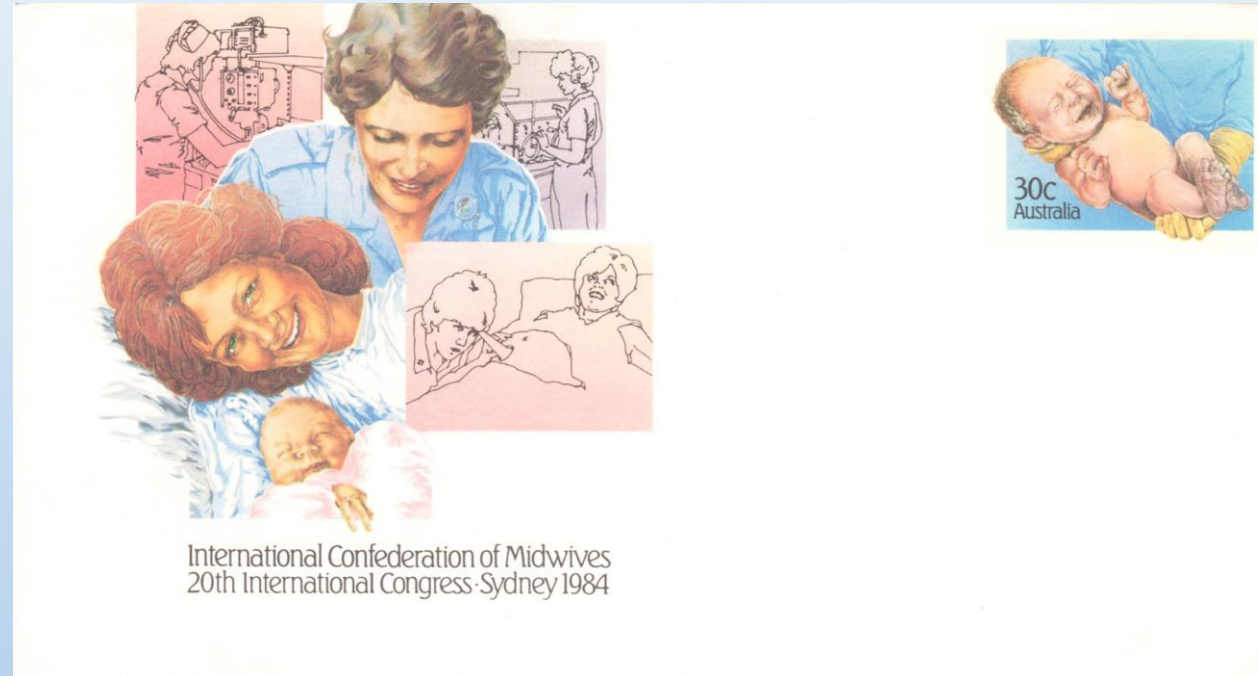


Commonly used to describe someone belittling another. Recorded in a 1927 issue of *American Speech*.

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III- Man _____ out with the bathwater

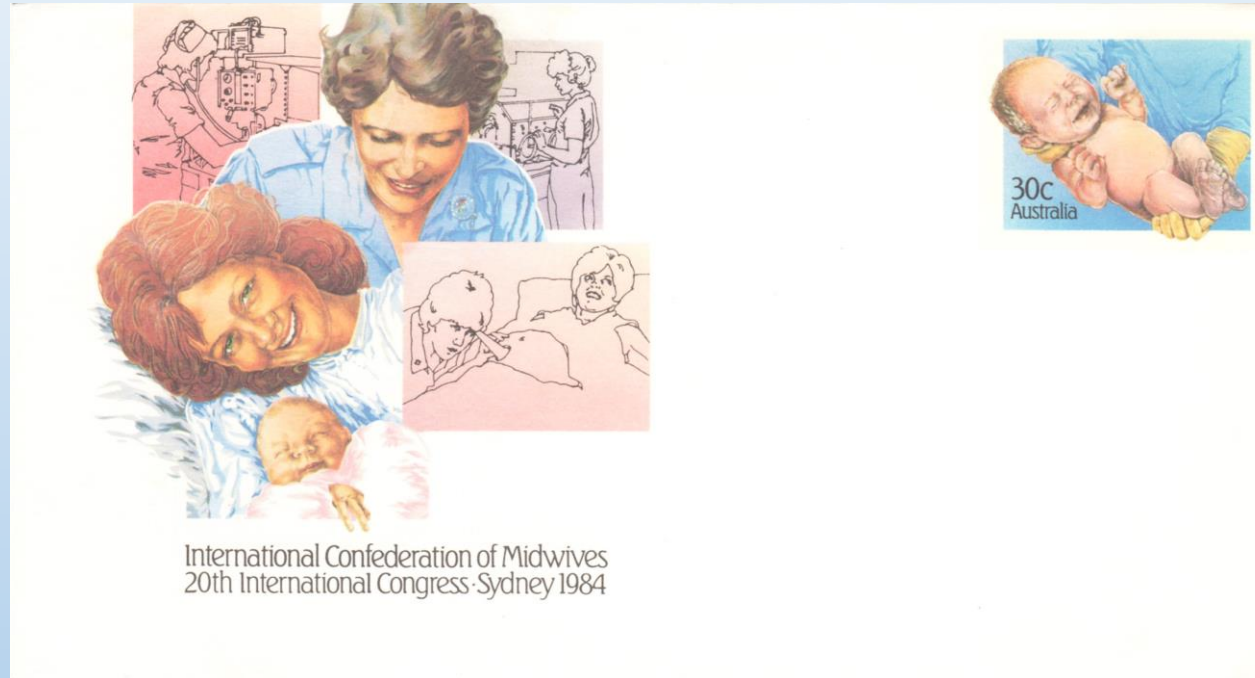
- *disregard the important item*



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III- Man throw the baby out with the bathwater

- *disregard the important item*



Probably originated by George Bernard Shaw, who used the expression in several works, as in the 1909 *Pen Portraits and Review*, "Like all reactionists, he usually empties the baby out with the bath."

III- Man have them eating right _____

- *be totally in control*



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III- Man have them eating right out of their hands

- *be totally in control*

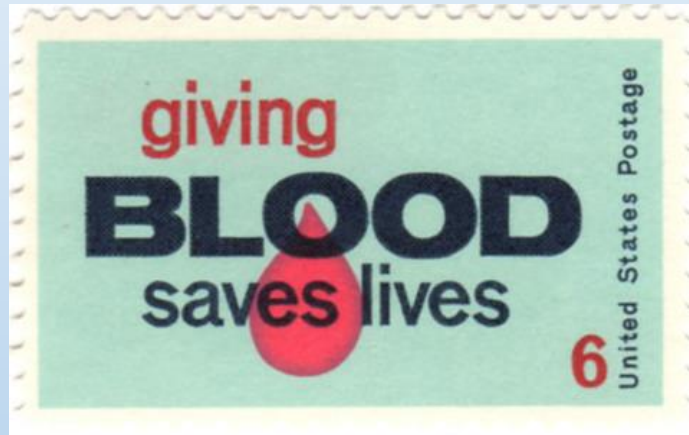


Used by Hugh Warpole in 1921's *Young Enchantment*, "I won a glorious victory and Victoria has been eating out of my hand ever since."

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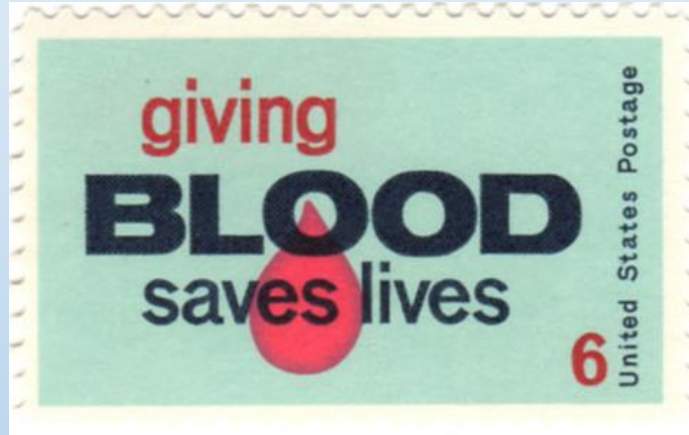
III- Man _____ than water

- *relatives stick together*



III- Man blood is thicker than water

- *relatives stick together*



Variation of an old German saying. English version used in 1815 by Sir Walter Scott in *Guy Mannering*, "Well- blood's thicker than water- she's welcome to the cheese."

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III- Man have a _____

- *complaint to settle*



III- Man have a bone to pick

- *complaint to settle*



Dates to the 16th century, referring to how a dog worries about finding bones.

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III- Man let your _____

- *loosen up, relax*



III- Man let your hair down

- *loosen up, relax*



In the 1800's, women wore their hair "pinned up" in public, later when home letting it down.

This is the end of Part III- Man.

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<http://www.rpastamps.org/presentations>